A CHRISTIAN NEWSLETTER ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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WALTER W. VAN KIRK

It is too soon to see fully the contribution of Walter Van Kirk to the witness of the churches in the field of world order: The impress of his spirit and labors will long be felt in the life and work of the churches. But it is not to soon to recognize that his faithful service has been blessed in its fruitfulness. During the three decades of his leadership in the Federal and National Councils, the work of the American churches in international affairs can be said to have come of age. From a preoccupation of an enthusiastic but rather isolated minority of churchmen, the struggle for peace with justice has become a central concern of the churches. This growth in the responsible Christian approach to the world of nations is in considerable measure a monument to our departed friend and colleague.

One reason for the effectiveness of his leadership was his own capacity for growth. He was never content to rest on past accomplishments, but continually sought new ways to raise the level of Christian cooperation in the field of international affairs. Without losing the fervor of his early pacifist convictions, he attained a rich insight into the complexities of world problems, and was able to unite Christians with differing views on war in responsible action for peace and justice. In the organization and conduct of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, in the establishment of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, in the reorganization of the Department of International Affairs, he was continually in the van.

Yet it was for the long and honorable record of the Department of International Justice and Goodwill that Walter Van Kirk may be best remembered. He was the personal embodiment of those twin objectives. His deep concern for justice was reflected in unremitting and eventually successful efforts to revise unjust immigration laws, and in countless other ways. His boundless goodwill, which was the natural expression of his warm and compassionate

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regard for people, was seen in deeds large and small. Among the more dramatic instances were the missions of goodwill and reconciliation to Japanese, German, and most recently Russian Christians.

The cause of Christian cooperation has had no more devoted supporter and champion. His concern that the American churches concert their peace efforts for a more effective and worthy witness to the nation was complemented by unwavering attachment to the ecumenical movement and the need for a global Christian strategy. The development of the C. C. I. A. owes much not only to his initiative but also to his steadfast loyalty and generous support.

While the ecumenical movement was especially close to his heart, Walter Van Kirk's spirit knew no frontiers. His long years of broadcasting "Religion in the News", for example, were a genuine contribution to inter-faith understanding and comity. His ability to work with a wide variety of people was seen, to cite one instance, in the organization and leadership of the National Peace Conference. In a divided world, he remained a world citizen.

A particular talent which Dr. Van Kirk brought to the service of the churches was his ability to communicate a sensitive Christian concern for the tangled affairs of nations to church people in all walks of life. In his addresses to church assemblies, in his broadcasts, in his sermons, he was close to the pulse of ordinary church folk, and unfailingly enlisted their interest. Unsparing of himself, he brought the Christian mission for world peace to the churches across America.

To all who worked with him, his qualities of humility and humor, which kept accomplishments and honors in a balanced perspective, were especially endearing. At a deeper level, his constant faith in the providence of a loving Father, which sustained him and his work in the darkest days, was the source of his radiant spirit.

Walter Van Kirk was a valiant and happy warrior in the cause of Christian efforts to build a just and peaceful world. We give thanks to God for his service and for his memory.

(The above tribute to the life and work of Walter W. Van Kirk is by a friend, former associate, and colleague of several years, Rev. Richard M. Fagley, Executive Secretary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. It was written at the invitation of the editor, after the passing of Dr. Van Kirk on July 6, from a heart attack, when at the height of his career of Christian world statesmanship.)

EDWIN E. AUBREY

A former Chairman of the Department of International Justice and Goodwill of the Federal Council of Churches, Dr. Edwin E. Aubrey, died in Philadelphia on September 9 at 60 years of age. That Department was the forerunner of the present Department of International Affairs of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Aubrey served as Chairman from 1944 to 1948. During those years he was President of Crozer Theological Seminary, Chester, Penna. Previous to that he was a Professor of Christian Theology and Ethics at the University of Chicago, and served at that time as a member of the Committee of Direction of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace. Since 1949 he was Chairman of the Department of Religious Thought at the University of Pennsylvania. He enjoyed a world reputation as author of a series of books on theology. His constant concern that religion be relevant to life led him to undertake such responsibilities as he assumed in leadership in the work of the churches for international justice, goodwill and peace.

REVIEW OF 84th CONGRESS ON ISSUES OF CONCERN IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Foreign Aid - The total appropriation amounts to $3.513 billion. Major items: Congress approved $1.950 billion for foreign military assistance and direct forces support; $1.162 billion for defense support; $250 million for development assistance (economic aid); $152 million for bi-lateral and multi-lateral technical assistance ($135 million for United States Technical Assistance, $15.5 million for U.N. Expanded Program of Technical Assistance, and $1.5 million for the Organization of American States.)

Interesting contrast: A total of approximately $40 billion was voted by Congress for military programs and installations including a $900 million un-asked for addition to the Air Force budget (the President, Secretary of Defense, and Joint Chiefs of Staff all said no to this addition but the Senate was undeterred.) Compared to this $40 billion for U.S. Military budgets approximately $400 million was appropriated for non-military foreign aid. Approximate ratio: 100:1.

The National Council of Churches through its Department of International Affairs played an active part in the passage of the section of the Mutual Security Act of 1956 which gave the U.N. Expanded Program of Technical Assistance, $15.5 million for the 1957 operations. When the House Appropriations Committee cut the proposal for UN Technical Assistance from $15.5 to $10 million the National Council began a program of alerting and working with various groups concerned in this proposed cut, including the constituent communions and units of the National Council such as United Church Women and the Division of Foreign Missions. Contacts were made with the Conference Group of Non-Governmental Organizations in support of the U.N. The Department of International Affairs also aided in sending telegrams to members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee. By the vigorous and combined efforts of many concerned organizations and individuals and the enlightened leadership of some members of the Senate and House, the full appropriation was finally restored. Drawback: Final act carried a rider: Next year's U.S. contribution for the U.N. Expanded Program of Technical Assistance not to exceed 1/3 of total contributions. (Present U.S. proportion: 1/2 of budget for UNTAA.) Question: How can concerned individuals and groups help remove this limitation on an important arm of U.S. Foreign Policy?

O.T.C. - This office to implement the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade will not function for a while - if ever - because of Congressional neglect. Among reasons given by some Senators was that they did not feel that the people of the United States were sufficiently interested in such a measure for them to risk a defeat on the floor so near to election time. No legislation was even reported out of Committee to the floor of Congress to put the Office for Trade Cooperation into effect.

Immigration - In spite of a last minute attempt to liberalize the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act in the form of a bi-partisan bill approved by the Senate on adjournment day, nothing was done. Also, the Refugee Relief Act will expire on December 31, 1956. The bi-partisan bill on immigration, limited as it was, came out so late there was not time for the House of Representatives to act upon it - even if they had wanted to do so.

Disarmament - Hearings were held in Washington, Boston and Minneapolis by the Senate Subcommittee on Disarmament. Witnesses represented religious, civic, labor and professional groups. The Committee has issued 3 staff studies and a volume called "Disarmament and Security, a Collection of Documents, 1919-55." Further reports anticipated.

Atomic Ship - $40 million was authorized by Congress for an atomic merchant ship. It will be finished in 18-26 months. Congress failed to authorize and appropriate funds for an Atomic Peace Ship requested by the President to tour the world under the U.S. flag as a part of the Atoms-for-Peace program.

"MORE COURAGEOUS AND IMAGINATIVE INITIATIVES" IN INTERNATIONAL AID URGED BY C. C. I. A.

Renewed emphasis on less developed areas of the world is being called for by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. Its Executive Committee at Herrenalb, Germany, in July, adopted a statement suggesting the need of "a dynamic guiding concept for a world-wide strategy of development." They commend certain considerations to the national commissions (such as the Department of International Affairs of the National Council of Churches) and to Christians generally. The text follows:

"The C.C.I.A. has repeatedly stressed the need for more substantial international assistance for economic and social development in less developed countries. In this connection, emphasis has been placed on the importance of plans for self-development and the training of qualified indigenous experts, the importance of more effective cooperation among the various assisting agencies and between them and national and local authorities, the value of longer-range planning and rational budgeting in assistance programmes, and the need for more careful evaluation in terms of unmet needs, to establish realistic priorities.

"What is perhaps most necessary is a dynamic guiding concept for a world-wide strategy of development. Towards this end, and in support of the concerns held by the churches, we emphasize the need for more courageous and imaginative initiatives in the field of international assistance. Without attempting to speak on the technical details of such initiatives, we put forward the following considerations, as illustrative of the boldness and scope required for a fully responsible development strategy. We direct the C.C.I.A. officers to take these and related considerations into account in their representations at the inter-governmental level. We also commend them to the attention of the national commissions and of Christians generally:

"1) Serious attempts should be made to strengthen and broaden, in the less industrialized countries, the basis of their participation in international trade, as a means to accelerate their development; and, in this connection, to seek international consideration of interim measures calculated to lessen the impact of market fluctuations in limited-product countries, which have grave economic and human consequences in these countries.

"2) The values in worthwhile existing assistance programmes, such as the United Nations Expanded Technical Assistance Programme, should be conserved and extended, by sufficiently long-range assurance of financial support, to make possible more stable planning and growth as may be favorable to greater service and efficiency.

"3) Effective public investment and efforts to stimulate sound private investment in the less developed countries, as through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Finance Corporation, should be extended.

"4) A serious effort should be made to provide a mutually acceptable and effective international fund for grants-in-aid and long-term low-interest loans, to help establish basic structures for economic development, whether through the SUNFED proposal or a better alternative.

"5) In addition to such steps more consideration should be given to overall planning and strategy in the field of international assistance for development. A possible means would be the establishment, within the general framework of the United Nations, of an advisory world development board, composed of experts whose competence and objectivity would assure attention and respect. Such a board could seek to set standards and promote safeguards for assistance programmes, review the various multilateral and bilateral programmes in terms of such standards and in relation to unmet needs, and call attention to tasks demanding priority rating."

CHRISTIANS CONFER, ACT AT SUMMER CONFERENCES ABROAD: WORLD COUNCIL, C.C.I.A.

Important meetings, including the Tenth Anniversary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, were held in various points in Europe and the Middle East this summer. Thumbnail sketches of these meetings and their concerns follow, but it is hoped that some of the texts of their deliberations may be dealt with in detail in forthcoming issues of the Newsletter.

A Conference of European and American Churchmen on Sections III and IV of the Evanston Report was sponsored by The Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches at Arnoldshain, Germany, July 9-14: "Social Problems - The Responsible Society in a World Perspective," and "International Affairs - Christians in the Struggle for World Community." In the international section particular concerns were those of the Unification of Germany and the questions of Disarmament and Justice. The latter involved a discussion of "the open society" in which peaceful change might best be facilitated in world order.

A Working Party on the Study of the World Council of Churches on "Common Christian Responsibility toward Areas of Rapid Social Change" met this summer, July 17-23, at Herrenalb, Germany, reviewed the reactions gathered from ecumenical discussions around the world during the past year, and outlined a revised, improved setting of the terms of reference for this study. It is now to be entered into in concentrated fashion for the next two years. WCC staff members are working in different areas of the world to stimulate the studies and to facilitate the ecumenical exchanges of views.

A Study Commission of the C.C.I.A. on "A Christian Approach to an International Ethos" met this summer at Herrenalb, Germany, July 26-27, in further developing initial phases of this study. They laid out a plan of work for the next two to three years, including the preparation and study of a series of preliminary papers of systematic and historical nature. It is reported that two or three national councils of churches are setting up study committees to work along the same general lines as the C.C.I.A. committee. One of the objectives of this study is to explore the possible development among different peoples of the globe an international ethos for world order.

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, in a meeting symbolic of the way Christian fellowship transcends national and political barriers gathered at Galyateto, near Budapest, Hungary, July 28 to Aug. 5. Among other items, of particular concern in international relations, were their considerations of: The Responsible Society, Economic Development, Justice, the Open Society, Subject Peoples, Nuclear Tests, False Propaganda, and Necessary Freedom.

A Conference on "the Problem of Arab Refugees from Palestine" was held May 21-25 at Beirut, Lebanon, convened by the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. This was a sequel to the first Beirut Conference on this subject in 1951. The purposes in 1956 were to reassure Christians in the Middle East of the concern of Christians in other parts of the world and to seek greater understanding of the political issues which must be faced. The program included outstanding speakers and adoption of a conference statement and recommendations. Consequent developments from this conference will be reported as soon as possible in the Newsletter.

The Tenth Anniversary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs was celebrated at the meeting of the Executive Board at Herrenalb, Germany, July 22-25, 1956. Distinguished Christian leaders from around the world shared in this celebration. Work at this meeting involved discussion and statements on a wide range of issues including: Relations with the UN and its specialized agencies, in which a statement was adopted on "Christian Concerns in UNESCO;" Disarmament and Experimental Tests of Nuclear Weapons; Arab Refugees and the Middle East; Re-unification of Germany; Economic and Social Development (see p.4); Refugees and Migration; the Development of International Non-Governmental Institutions; Areas of Crisis; Human Rights, Religious Liberty and Group Relationships.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? REPORTS OF COMMUNIONS, COUNCILS, CHURCHES

NEW PROCEDURES AND RESOLUTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

"How representative are positions taken by church bodies in Christian social action?" is the question heard from time to time. Efforts are constantly being made by responsible church organizations to assure that their positions are as representative as possible.

A new effort was made by the Congregational Christian churches this year to make their resolutions, which have been representative, even more so and to educate their constituency in the process. The Council for Social Action, on request of the Executive Committee of the General Council of Congregational Christian churches, prepared a draft of the proposed resolutions well in advance of the annual meeting and distributed them to churches across the country for study and comment, allowing three months for that program. Many previous months of preparation had gone into the draft resolution by three groups composed of outstanding church leaders and experts in particular fields: their Commission on Faith and Freedom, their Committee on Racial Integration and their International Relations Committee.

The draft resolutions, with a Report Form and Order Blank, as well as a letter of explanation of procedures, went to 4,500 Pastors and 5,500 Social Action Committee Members. 1,600 packets on Christian Faith and Freedom were also distributed. 362 orders came in for 23,000 additional copies of draft resolutions. 136 requests were received for background material on International Relations. Many indications were observed that numerous churches gave careful attention to these draft resolutions. Report forms were returned by 184 churches from 34 states, including D.C. and Hawaii. More than 100 personal letters were received, many with extensive comments. Over 550 specific comments were transmitted to those responsible for revision.

The second drafts were laid out by staff members on basis of the above comments. These were then revised by the three responsible groups cited above. This revision was sent to the delegates for study about two weeks before the General Council. When the delegates assembled at Omaha in mid-June an open hearing was held by the Council for Social Action, giving all delegates an opportunity to present their views. These were taken into account in the final draft resolutions presented to the General Council in plenary session three days later. Through further discussion and vote there, these became the official actions of the General Council, representing Congregational Christian churches of this country.

Leadership in this program of making resolutions more meaningful, more representative and of more value, was given by Dr. Ray Gibbons as Director of the Council for Social Action; and among others, by Dr. John Bennett of Union Seminary, Chairman of the International Relations Committee and Dr. Herman Reissig, Executive Secretary of the Department of International Relations, in the section on international affairs.

In evaluation of this process, CSA said: "It is the judgment of the CSA that the procedure was generally approved, that it helped to improve the resolutions presented to the General Council, that it stimulated thought and discussion of social issues, and that it revealed opinions which will be helpful in the guidance of the future program of the CSA. In the light of this experience the Council for Social Action recommends:

"--That the General Council commends the procedure of submitting draft resolutions to the churches for study prior to the meetings of the General Council and instructs the Executive Committee of the General Council and the Council for Social Action to develop and use this procedure in the future."

In addition to Resolutions on Christian Faith and Freedom, Racial Integration and International Affairs, the Congregational Christians also acted on others in the fields of Evangelism, Christian Higher Education, Alcohol, Federal Aid to Education, Statehood for Hawaii and Alaska and recommending a Washington Office for CSA.

The Resolutions on International Affairs begin with a statement of Christian convictions regarding the nature of God, man, nations and society. The conclusions:

"1. We believe the most important contribution the United States can make to the world is not in anything it may export but in what it is. A perplexed and strife-ridden world needs most from our country the inspiration of a society which maintains order without sacrificing freedom, which believes in and practices justice, which provides for the material needs of the people, where there is unity without enforced uniformity, where the dignity of all men is respected, and which strives to live in peace and mutual helpfulness with its neighbors...This is our first responsibility as American Christians, and to this task we dedicate ourselves.

"2. The armed strength of the United States and of the free world, while apparently essential in existing circumstances, is only a partial and negative defense of the free way of life. A stronger and more lasting defense lies in the vigorous and sustained use of American political, economic, and moral resources to help weaker countries develop their social institutions.

"3. Not primarily as a way of defeating communism,but as a way of serving human life and of meeting its moral responsibility, the United States should support a larger program of economic and technical aid to Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and other parts of the world where it is needed. This should be done through both American governmental and private agencies and, in much larger proportion than now, through the United Nations... Our country should join in a multi-lateral program of economic development through the United Nations, such as the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, SUNFED. We also strongly support international education programs to help promote understanding among nations.

"4. The true welfare of people in the contemporary world requires emphasis on their interdependence, their international responsibility, and their political maturity, as well as their right to national sovereignty. But the polices of our government should never leave in doubt the basic sympathy of the American people with struggles for freedom and equality. The Christian conception of the worth and dignity of human beings cannot, we believe, be reconciled with indefinite continuance of colonialism, in either its traditional or its communist form."

Other resolutions dealt with trade, support for Reciprocal Agreements and O.T.C.; persistence in careful negotiation of international issues; multilateral reduction of armaments; support of U.S. and UN atoms-for-peace programs; liberalization of U.S. immigration laws; seizing every opportunity to help in solution of Arab-Israeli problems; encouragement of intercultural contacts between people of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.; reaffirmation of support of the United Nations, and its specialized agencies such as UNESCO and WHO, and support for increasingly universal UN membership.

The Resolutions conclude with a "Call to Study and Action": "We urge our churches to recognize their responsibility, not only for the teaching of basic Christian beliefs, but also for helping their members apply their faith to specific and often complex social questions...Sermons and addresses can help, but they are not enough. We strongly urge each local church to make provision for sustained and careful discussion of social problems, under the leadership of official social action committees, in adult classes, or through special discussion groups." Copies in attractive booklet, 1-25 copies, 10¢ each; 100 or more, 5¢ each, from: Council for Social Action, Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10.

RESOURCES: WORLD ORDER SUNDAY: UN WEEK: CROP MOVIE: ELECTIONS RESPONSIBILITY

WORLD ORDER SUNDAY FOLDER: "Christian Concern and World Community" is the title of the attractive World Order Sunday folder for use in the churches on October 21. This is a publication arranged by the Department of International Affairs of the N.C.C. The folder contains: A cover design with a brief Rededication which may well be used in the service of worship in churches on that day; a Message which has been approved for the National Council of Churches by the Executive Board of the Division of Christian Life and Work; and suggestions for programs, materials and other action. Last year's use of a similar folder multiplied four-fold the recent distribution of such materials. It is hoped that every possible minister and church will order a sufficient quantity of these to distribute to the congregation on World Order Sunday. Cost: $3 per hundred or 5¢ per single copy. Orders may be placed through one's own denominational Christian Social Education and Action agency or Board of World Peace or through the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches, 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N.Y.

UN WEEK MATERIALS: Other materials for UN Week, October 21-27, including UN Day, October 24, may be obtained from the following sources: A booklet, "United Nations Week" (single copy free), and other materials from the Church Peace Union, 170 East 64th Street, New York 21, N.Y. "Leaders Guide for Individual and Community Action - 1956" and many other materials from the United States Committee for the United Nations, 816 21st Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. Other materials and help on speakers from The American Association for the United Nations, 345 East 46th Street, New York 17, N.Y.

MOVIE: "I Saw the Need." How CROP, Christian Rural Overseas Program, distributes food gifts among hungry people in the world. Documented story is by the agency itself, 16mm, black and white, sound, running time is 14 minutes. Good for groups interested in functions of Church World Service. Address requests to CROP Headquarters, Elkhart, Ind. Include first and second choice of dates wanted, your name and address, the name of your church or organization for which you plan to show the movie. Price: free to church, farm and youth groups.

PAMPHLET: "Christian Responsibility in the 1956 Elections", a cogent statement by the General Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. on Christian participation in the forthcoming election. It deals with: The right and duty of Christians to be heard on political issues. How we can influence the public climate. The responsibility of churchmen on national issues, on civil rights and liberties, and on foreign policy. It gives certain policies of the General Board on these issues. Price: 5¢ per copy, $4.00 per hundred. Order from: The Division of Christian Life and Work, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.

IN NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER: Story of N.C.C. representations before the Platform Committees of both Parties on matters of Christian Concern.

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